

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order DE 80-2, filed 6/24/80)

WAC 173-563-010 Background and purpose. The Columbia River is an international as well as an interstate river with its waters subject to laws of seven western states, the Province of British Columbia, Canada and the federal governments of the United States and Canada. The flows and levels of the river are in a state of continuous change through the operation of numerous federally owned or federally licensed dams located within the river. The waters of the Columbia River are operated to support extensive irrigation development, inland navigation, municipal and industrial uses, and hydroelectric power development. Among all these uses, the anadromous fisheries of the Columbia River, which are dependent on clean flowing water, require for their survival the establishment of minimum flows of water and special actions by all agencies sharing in the management of the Columbia River.

~~The ((provisions of this chapter apply, as a matter of state law, to water right permits issued pursuant to the state's water rights code. The provisions hereof shall provide the department of ecology the basic state policy relating to minimum flows and levels for the Columbia River, for submission to various federal, interstate and state agencies having jurisdiction over the river. Further, the))~~ department of ecology of the state of Washington recognizes that, under our federal constitutional system, regulatory powers over the river are shared powers between the United States and the state of Washington and that by various federal actions the state's powers may, and in some cases have been superseded through the mandates of the Supremacy Clause of the United States Constitution.

This chapter is adopted under state legislation, to promote the proper utilization of the water resources of the Columbia River and to protect and insure the viability of the instream resource values associated with the main stem of the Columbia River in the future through (1) the establishment of minimum flows on the main stem Columbia River in Washington state, and (2) the establishment of conservation and efficiency fundamentals relating to out-of-stream and instream uses and values.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order 97-15, filed 3/30/98, effective 4/30/98)

WAC 173-563-020 Applicability. (1) This chapter applies to any application to divert public surface waters of the main stem Columbia River in Washington state ((and)), or to withdraw any ground water ((the withdrawal of)) which is determined by the department of ecology to have a significant and direct impact on the surface waters of the main stem Columbia River, for which a decision is made by the department prior to July 11, 2005, (the effective date of chapter 173-565 WAC).

For the purposes of this chapter, the extent of the "main stem" Columbia River shall be the Columbia River from the upstream extent of tidal influence (Bonneville Dam-River Mile 146.1) upstream to the United States-Canada border (River Mile 745) and including those areas inundated by impounded waters at full pool elevations.

(2) Chapter 173-500 WAC, the general rules of the department of ecology for the implementation of the comprehensive water resources program mandated by RCW 90.54.040, applies to this chapter.

(3) Nothing in this chapter shall affect existing water rights, riparian, appropriative, or otherwise, existing on the effective date of this chapter, including existing rights relating to the operation of any navigation, hydroelectric, or water storage reservoir, or related facilities. This exemption includes rights embodied in all water right permits and certificates existing on the effective date of this chapter.

(4) The instream flows established and implemented by this chapter for instream and out-of-stream uses, and the average weekly flows applied by this chapter to out-of-stream uses do not apply to any application for water from the main stem Columbia River on which a decision is made by the department of ecology on or after July 27, 1997. Any water right application considered for approval or denial after that date and prior to July 11, 2005, (the effective date of chapter 173-565 WAC) will be evaluated for possible impacts on fish and existing water rights. The department will consult with appropriate local, state, and federal agencies and Indian tribes in making this evaluation. Any permit which is then approved for the use of such waters will be, if deemed necessary, subjected to instream flow protection or mitigation conditions determined on a case-by-case basis through the evaluation conducted with the agencies and tribes. Applications for which a decision will be made by

the department after July 11, 2005, are subject to the requirements of chapter 173-565 WAC.

(5) Waters withdrawn by the United States pursuant to RCW 90.40.030 prior to the effective date of this rule relating to the second half of the Columbia basin project, and water right permits and certificates hereafter issued by the department of ecology pertaining to such withdrawn waters, are not subject to the provisions of this chapter.

(6) For the purposes of this chapter, average weekly flows shall be the average of the daily average flows reported in the Columbia River operational hydromet and management system (CROHMS) for a seven-day period beginning at 12:01 a.m. Monday and ending at midnight on Sunday. When the beginning of the seven-day period defined in this section does not correspond to the dates on which flows are established in WAC 173-563-040, the flow requirements for that week shall be the arithmetic average of the required flows listed in WAC 173-563-040 for each of the seven days, rounded to the nearest 1,000 cfs.